



Secondary Transition in a Standards Aligned System:

Road Map for IEP Development

Secondary Transition is the process of preparing students for adult life after they leave high school. Transition planning begins at age 14, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, as students consider their goals for the time after graduation through career awareness exploration activities. The transition process continues through high school as academic instruction and community experiences help clarify and support students' goals. The entire process is based on individual student needs, taking into account each student's strengths, preferences, and interests.

Transition can be thought of as a bridge between school programs and the opportunities of adult life, including higher education or training, employment, independent living and community participation.

Pennsylvania educators facilitate students' successful transition by using a six-step process to develop the IEP; to guide the way for students, families, educators, and service providers; and to prepare students to cross the "bridge" to adult life.

Six Step Process for Addressing Secondary Transition

Step One	Use assessment to identify the student's post-secondary desired goals or vision.
Step Two	Describe the student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement / Functional Performance (PLAAFP), embedding Assessment data
Step Three	Establish Transition Team partnerships
Step Four	Design a Transition Plan that includes Courses of Study and Services/Activities
Step Five	Determine Measurable Annual Goals that address skill deficits and lead to post-secondary goals
Step Six	Monitor progress and adjust instruction based on data

Step One: Use Assessment to Identify the Student's Post-Secondary Goals or Vision

Assessment is a critical component of a Standards Aligned System and forms the basis for secondary transition. Assessment for transition planning is an ongoing process of collecting data on the student's needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future employment, education, and independent living. Assessment data serves as the common thread in the transition process and forms the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Step One has three components which are completed *before* the initial IEP meeting and updated annually.

- A. Identify interests and preferences:** The team uses a variety of formal and informal assessments to determine the student's interests and preferences. These might include interest inventories, surveys, interviews, online assessments, direct observations, and environmental analyses.
- B. Set post-secondary goals:** Based on assessment data, the student identifies what s/he would like to do when high school is completed for each of three areas: Post-Secondary Education/Training, Employment, and Independent Living. These post-secondary goals include the kind of education or training the student will receive, the kind of job s/he might have, where s/he will live, and how s/he will access and spend time in the community. Federal law requires "appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills (§300.320[b][1]). Each post-secondary goal area is updated annually based on assessment.
- C. Further assess aptitudes, abilities, and skills:** Once the student's post-secondary goals for post-secondary education, employment, and independent living have been identified, team members complete additional assessments to determine the student's current status in relationship to the goals. Assessments include measures of skills such as: reading, math, written language, organizational, work-related, social, self-determination, adaptive behavior, daily living, travel, employability, dexterity, and other skill areas determined on an individual basis. Assessments are used to identify gaps between current functioning and those skills needed to reach post-secondary goals. These assessments also help to identify the types of services and supports the student will need to reach post-secondary goals.

Develop Annual IEP:

The IEP team (made up of the student, parents, teachers, and educational and agency representatives) writes the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes Steps Two through Five.

Step Two: Describe the Student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement / Functional Performance (PLAAFP), Embedding Assessment Data

The ***Present Levels of Academic Achievement / Functional Performance (PLAAFP)*** section of the IEP:

- Uses multiple sources of assessment data to paint a clear picture of the student's current performance in:
 - Academic areas such as reading, writing, math, and content areas
 - Functional areas such as communication, organization, social interactions, self-advocacy and self-determination skills, activities of daily living, travel or mobility, or basic consumer skills.
- Clearly describes the student's goals for post-secondary education/training, employment, and independent living, relating performance data to those post-secondary goals.
- Includes information from parents and caregivers.
- Describes effect of the student's disability on performance.
- Identifies student strengths and prioritizes needs.
- Provides the baseline for development of measurable annual goals.
- Guides development of other areas of the IEP.

Step Three: Establish Transition Team Partnerships

Effective transition planning is accomplished through a partnership that begins with school and family, but extends to community and governmental agencies, employers, organizations and others who, together, can promote the student's pursuit of successful outcomes during the transition process.

- Required members of the IEP team include the student, parents/guardians, local education agency (LEA) representative, general education teacher, special education teacher and career-technical education representative if being considered.
- Agency partners ***must*** be invited to the IEP team meeting with parent permission if it is anticipated that the agency will provide or pay for services for the student.

Step Four: Design a Transition Plan that Includes Courses of Study and Services/Activities

Step Four outlines the ***"Coordinated Set of Activities"*** required by IDEA to assist the student in meeting his/her post-secondary goals. The Coordinated Set of Activities includes Courses of Study as well as Services and Activities; these are documented in Section III of the IEP, which is also referred to as the "Transition Grid."

- ***Courses of Study*** refer to the academic courses or classes that the student will complete each year that support the achievement of his/her individual post-secondary goals. Courses of study:
 - Focus on improving academic and functional achievement to support post-secondary goals.
 - Facilitate movement from school to the adult world by aligning curriculum with identified transition outcomes.
 - Promote graduation by meeting requirements.
- ***Transition Services and Activities*** are action steps to be completed each year, and support the student's movement towards his/her post-secondary goals.

- **Transition Services** include **instruction** to address identified needs or skill deficits in areas such as reading, math, organization, social, adaptive living, or work-related skills. Each post-secondary goal area must include at least one service that is linked to a measurable annual goal.
- **Transition Activities** are activities to be completed during the course of the IEP year, but do not require a measurable annual goal. Examples include exploring options for post-secondary education, developing a resume, practicing interview skills, exploring employment opportunities, attending a college or employment fair, exploring housing opportunities, registering to vote, etc.
- Transition services and activities can occur both in school and in the community.
- The **person(s)/agency responsible** are those key educational staff, agencies, persons, etc. that support each service or activity.

Step Five: Determine Measurable Annual Goals that Address Skill Deficits and Lead to Post-Secondary Goals

Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) are measurable estimates of expected student outcomes in an IEP year based on the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and anticipated rate of learning. Measurable annual goals are designed to build skills which allow students to progress in the general curriculum, build independence, and achieve post-secondary goals.

Developing measurable annual goals aligned to the PA Academic/Common Core Standards is *recommended* as effective practice for all students with disabilities, regardless of nature or complexity of needs.

Each measurable annual goal must include:

- Student name
- Clearly defined behavior (what the student will do) in measurable, observable terms
- The condition(s) in which the student will be assessed to demonstrate the behavior
- Performance criteria (the level the student must demonstrate for mastery; how consistently the student needs to perform the skill before it's considered "mastered;" and, how frequently the skill will be assessed.

Step Six: Monitor Progress and Adjust Instruction Based on Data

Progress monitoring in a Standards Aligned System involves collecting and analyzing data over time to assess the student's performance, and determine if instruction is meeting the student's identified needs. Based on progress monitoring data, instructional changes, including revisions to the IEP, may be needed.

Steps One through Five represent a process that continues each year until graduation. When the student is ready to graduate or exit high school, the team must provide a:

Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (SAAFP)

IDEA 2004 requires that schools provide a **Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (SAAFP)** to students with disabilities who are exiting high school. The SAAFP contains a summary of the student's current academic and functional performance, and is designed to help the student continue to articulate his/her individual strengths, access needed supports, and to better understand the impact of his/her disability as s/he enters adult life.